

Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

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FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2702
INFO AMCONSUL ASMARA

C O N F I D E N T I A L ADDIS ABABA 0858

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, ET
SUBJ: DEMOCRATIC RIGHTS TO MASSES

1. EMBASSY HAS BEEN ATTEMPTING TO ASCERTAIN WHY MENGISTU'S FEBRUARY 4 SPEECH HEADLINED IN PRESS AS PMAC PLEDGE OF DEMOCRATIC RIGHTS TO MASSES, SINCE LITTLE IN TEXT REFERS TO THIS SUBJECT OR INDICATES HOW PMAC INTENDS TO PROCEED TOWARDS PROVIDING RIGHTS TO MASSES. IN COURSE OF SPEECH, MENGISTU STATED DEMOCRATIC RIGHTS WOULD BE REAFFIRMED OPENLY AND IN PUBLIC, ARMS AND DEMOCRACY TO BROAD MASSES WOULD BE IMPLEMENTED, MASSES HAD REAFFIRMED BURNING DESIRE TO CREATE PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC ETHIOPIA (SIC) AND DEMOCRATIC RIGHTS SHOULD IMMEDIATELY BE GIVEN TO OPPRESSED.

2. WHILE EMBASSY STILL PUZZLED BY PRESS EMPHASIS ON DEMOCRATIC RIGHTS, SOVIET EMBOFF HAS STATED EPMG DRAWING UP PROGRAM TO GIVE DEMOCRATIC RIGHTS TO "PROGRESSIVE" INDIVIDUALS AND GROUPS. MOFA SOURCE INDICATED THAT AT JAN. 27 SPEECH TO KEBELE LEADERS MENGISTU HAD RESPONDED FAVORABLY TO REQUEST FOR BOTH "DEMOCRATIC RIGHTS" AND ARMS. AS EVIDENCE OF MENGISTU'S INTENTIONS, SUDANESE SOURCE SAYS AT LEAST ONE ADDIS KEBELE SECURITY COMMITTEE HAS BEEN ARMED WITH RECENTLY ARRIVED CHINESE WEAPONS.

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3. EMBASSY NOTES NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC REVOLUTION PROGRAM DIFFERENTIATES BETWEEN HUMAN AND DEMOCRATIC RIGHTS TO SOME EXTENT. EPMG EMPHASIS WILL NO DOUBT BE ON POLITICAL RIGHTS, I.E., RIGHTS TO TEACH AND LEARN PROGRESSIVE IDEOLOGY, TO ORGANIZE AND BE ORGANIZED INTO MASS POLITICAL ORGANIZATION AS STEP TOWARD ESTABLISHING UNITED FRONT AND EVENTUAL POLITICAL

PARTY. UNDER NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC REVOLUTION PROGRAM, PEOPLE'S OFFICE FOR MASS ORGANIZATION AFFAIRS (POMOA) RESPONSIBLE FOR ORGANIZING OPPRESSED MASSES. NEVERTHELESS, SWEDISH SOURCE WHO HAS SEVERAL POLITBURO CONTACTS THROUGH POLITICAL TRAINING SCHOOL, EXPRESSED VIEW THAT DESPITE ENHANCED POMOA POSITION, IT UNLIKELY ITS ACTIVITIES WOULD BE GREATLY EXPANDED IN NEAR FUTURE.

4. SOVIET SOURCE INDICATED ONE PRIMARY DIFFERENCE BETWEEN MENGITU AND FORMER MOGES/ALEMAYEHU FACTION WAS APPROACH TOWARDS ORGANIZING MASSES. MENISTU/HAILE FIDA GROUP FAVORED ORGANIZATION FROM BOTTON UP, (I.E. STARTING AT PEASANT ASSOCIATION, THEN TO WOREDA, TO AWRAJA, TO REGION), MOGES/ALEMAYEHU FROM TOP DOWN. EMBASSY SPECULATES THIS DIFFERENCE, COUPLED WITH FACT MOGES GIVEN RESPONSIBILITY FOR POMOA AFTER DECEMBER PMAC REORGANIZATION, STRONG CONTRIBUTING FACTORS TO RECENT PURGE. SOVIET SOURCE STATED MENGISTU MOVE PLANNED AND "MENGISTU HAD ACTED FASTER THAN EXPECTED."

5. IN ANY CASE, IT APPEARS THAT PMAC CONCERNED OVER INCREASED INSURGENT ACTIVITIES, PARTICULARLY EDU, AND THAT MENGISTU-HAILE FIDA FACTION PERCEIVES NEED TO OFFER SOMETHING TANGIBLE TO STRENGTHEN SUPPORT AMONG URBAN AND RURAL MASSES TO FACT INCIPIENT THREAT.
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Message Attributes

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